

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /058 W

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P R 271355Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1423

INFO AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LONDON 07922

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PDEV, UK(NI)

SUBJECT: PROTESTANT CLERGYMAN ALLEGES HMG/IRA DEAL TO
WITHDRAW TROOPS

1. REVEREND WILLIAM ARLOW, SECRETARY OF NI COMMITTEE OF WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (AND MEMBER OF CHURCH GROUP WHICH MET WITH PROVISIONAL IRA IN LATE 1974 AT FEAKLE TO ARRANGE CEASEFIRE) MAY 25 TOLD NI PRESS THAT HE HAD REASON TO BELIEVE HMG HAD MADE FIRM COMMITMENT TO IRA TO WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM NI AND THAT FAILURE OF CONVENTION WOULD TRIGGER IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS AGREEMENT. ARLOW DID NOT PROVIDE ANY DETAILED INFORMATION TO SUPPORT THIS ASSERTION, BUT SUBSEQUENTLY REPEATED IT ON BBC/ULSTER RADIO INTERVIEW.

2. ARLOW'S SENSATIONAL STATEMENT, WHICH AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE IS WITHOUT BASIS IN FACT, TRIGGERED CONDITIONED RESPONSES FROM BOTH SIDES IN NI AND HAS CREATED MINOR STORM IN ULSTER, WESTMINSTER AND, ACCORDING TO PRESS, DUBLIN. SECRETARY REES MAY 25 ISSUED FOLLOWING DENIAL: "THERE IS NO TRUTH IN THE STATEMENT MADE BY REV. ARLOW CONCERNING AN ALLEGED AGREEMENT ABOUT WITHDRAWAL OF
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BRITISH TROOPS FROM NI." LONDON MEDIA HAVE GIVEN ARLOW

STATEMENT, REES DENIAL AND VIEWS OF ULSTER LEADERS PROM-
INENT PLAY, WITH TIMES CHARACTERIZING THESE DEVELOPMENTS
AS "POLITICAL CRISIS." MEDIA OPINION HERE SUPPORTS HMG
POSITION (GUARDIAN QUOTES ONE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL CALLING
ARLOW "STARK, STARING BONKERS") AND GENERALLY AGREE THAT
TROOP WITHDRAWAL IS ONE OF LEAST VIABLE OPTIONS FACING
GOVERNMENT IN EVENT CONVENTION FAILS. WE WILL BE MEETING
WITH NI OFFICE LATER TODAY AND WILL REPORT RESULTS.

RICHARDSON

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